

Serial Number: 10/044,996
Group Art Unit: 3616

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please make the following amendments to the specification.

1. Please delete paragraph [0001] of the published application, which corresponds to the paragraph under the section heading entitled "Cross-Reference to Related Applications" in the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

--This application is a division of U.S. Application No. 09/405,339, filed September 24, 1999, Patent No. 6,355,123, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 09/110,632, filed July 6, 1998, Patent No. 6,113,141.--

2. Please delete paragraph [0032] of the published application, which corresponds to the sentence on page 7, lines 4-6, of the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

--FIG. 16 illustrates a partial top plan view of a notched portion of the reinforcing member for forming an internal or external radius.--

3. Please delete paragraph [0036] of the published application, which corresponds to the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 5, of the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

-- As mentioned above, the perimeter edges 18 and 22, respectively, of the upper and lower fabric panels 15 and 20 are bonded together. In the preferred embodiment, the upper and lower fabric panels 15 and 20 are secured, preferably, by a RF weld or alternatively, an ultrasonic or thermal weld. Thus, it will be appreciated that the coating agent is preferably reactive to RF energy in order to effect bonding. However, the upper and lower fabric panels

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15 and 20 can also be secured by means of an adhesive which has a high degree of thermal stability. It will be recognized by those skilled in the art that the time for inflating and thus, expanding roll-over airbag 10 is measured in milliseconds, and that, as a result, a large amount of tear stress is placed upon the state of the art joint, or seal. Moreover, a roll-over airbag must sustain this pressure for a longer period of time than the state of the art frontal or side impact airbag, which, by design, deflates rapidly immediately following inflation. In order to reinforce this joint, a lap joint 30 is utilized using an additional piece of fabric in order to distribute the stress over a larger surface area of the upper and lower fabric panels 15 and 20 and thereby transform the tear stress into a shear stress. In this regard, at least one securement member 32 is disposed proximate the perimeter seal such that the upper portion 34 of the securement member 32 is bonded to the upper fabric panel 15 and the lower portion 36 of the securement member 32 is bonded to the lower fabric panel 20. Tests have shown that this reinforced perimeter seal is capable of sustaining pressure for an extended period of time. FIG. 16 illustrates a segment 32 that is notched so as to form either an internal radius, illustrated in FIG. 14, or an external radius, illustrated in FIG. 15. In either configuration, if additional reinforcement is necessary, an additional curved segment (not shown) can be bonded over the portion of the segment 132 that is bonded to the upper fabric panel 15 and an additional curved segment (not shown), can be bonded over the portion of the segment 132 that is bonded to the lower fabric panel 20.--

4. Please delete paragraph [0038] of the published application, which corresponds to the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 14, of the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

--In FIGS. 5 and 7, an alternate embodiment of a tether is illustrated as tether 40'. In this regard, tether 40' is defined by a first folded fabric member 70 which is bonded to the upper fabric panel 15 and a cooperating second folded fabric member 75. The folded portions of first folded fabric member 70 and second folded fabric member 75 are secured to one another by a securement member 80, which in the preferred embodiment is defined by parallel rows of stitching. Further, to distribute the stress of expansion over a larger surface

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area, the terminal ends of securement member 80, are not coextensive with the edges of the first and second folded fabric members 70 and 75. In this regard, first and second folded fabric members 70 and 75 have a first preselected width and securement member 80 has a second preselected width which is less than the preselected width of first and second folded fabric members 70 and 75.--

5. Please delete paragraph [0040] of the published application, which corresponds to the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 11, of the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

--If additional securement of the upper panel member 140 to the lower panel member 145 is desired, for instance, in order to distribute stress at the end of each row of stitching 150 over a broader surface area, the terminal ends can be joined by means of an additional region of securement 165 which is wider than the region of securement 160. In one embodiment, the additional region of securement 165 is defined by a line of stitching 155, which encloses an area having a greater width than the width of the rows of stitching 150, and which is preferably circular or elliptical.--

6. Please delete paragraph [0042] of the published application, which corresponds to the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 3, of the as-filed application, and replace such deleted paragraph with the following:

--In either embodiment of tether 40", the upper panel member 140 of the tether 40" is then bonded to the upper fabric panel 15 or 15' of either roll-over airbag 10 or 10', respectively, while the lower panel member 145 of the tether 40" is secured to the lower fabric panel 20 or 20' of either airbag 10 or 10', respectively. While preferred methods of providing the region of securement 160, have been described, those skilled in the art will recognize that other methods are feasible. In this regard, there are multiple stitching patterns that could be utilized to provide at least one region of securement 160, and at least one region

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of securement 160 could be provided by having the upper and lower panels 140 and 145 woven together at selected areas.—